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Variation in the Krio Speech Community*

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1. Introduction

In refining the revolutionary framework which he had introduced a decade earlier, Chomsky (1965:3) explicitly proposed that the domain of the theoretical linguist was the language of "an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-community." For many who were to work within the Chomskyan paradigm, it was found that such a domain was too narrowly defined and that it tended to exclude from our consideration a substantial number of facts. The only kind of variation formally accounted for in the Standard Theory was stated in terms of optional rules, which characterize synonymy in syntax and 'free variation' in phonology.

In stating the goal of their paper, Elliott, Legum, and Thompson (1969) state:

> What we would like to show here is that variation, particularly of the very subtle types which exist among speakers who apparently have the same dialect, must be considered part of our data, because variation is a fact, and any theory of language which ignores it cannot be as complete as one which does not.

It is clear from this statement that, at least for these three writers, the dictates of Standard Theory and its formalism are not sufficient for an adequate account of our data.[1] The works of Labov, DeCamp, C-J. Bailey, Bickerton and others have demonstrated beyond a doubt that linguistic variation must be a central concern of the theoretical linguist, if for no other reason, because of its vital role in historical change.

This paper will describe the variation found in two subsystems of the Krio language of Sierra Leone. The first subsystem to be discussed concerns the rule of Negative Concord, whereas the other the other involves a particular set of prepositions. By plotting such variation on implicational tables of the type refined by Bickerton (1973), I intend to demonstrate the utility of such tables as devices for deepening our understanding of variational phenomena.

Investigations into the variation found in various creole languages have prompted the researchers to refer to the phenomenon as a continuum since there appears to be an infinite number of variants between the official language and the most conservative form of the creoles. The study of Jamaican Creole (DeCamp 1971) and Guyanese Creole (Bickerton 1972, 1973) have demonstrated that

a great deal of variation is found in the auxiliary and pronominal systems. Since this variation is indicative of change-in-progress, and since the changes are obviously in the direction of the official language of the state (English in these two cases), the term 'decreolizing' seems to be quite an appropriate label for the process which they are undergoing. However, the term is only appropriate for those situations in which the language is undergoing very drastic changes, resulting in restructuring of the grammar. The implication is that the creole language will eventually merge with the official language.

With regard to the Krio data, no such drastic evolution is in sight. We find virtually no variation in the auxiliary or pronominal systems, and absolutely no variation involving the replacement by properly inflected forms of English auxiliaries or gender distinction in pronominal forms. Some of the variation which is found, however, does involve the substitution of English items for certain conservative Krio items. Though there is a level of Krio which is highly anglicized, it cannot be mistaken for English. In other words, Krio does not appear to exemplify a true continuum situation.

2. Negative concord in Krio

Before I present the data and discussion of the variation found with regard to the Krio rule of Negative Concord, a few comments on methodology are in order. The citations to be offered here were elicited from native Krio speakers who came from a wide range of age groups, educational backgrounds, occupations, etc.[2] I compiled a questionnaire of as many English sentence and construction types as possible without making the questionnaire unwieldy. Though the proponents of variation theory insist upon the collection of unmonitored speech as the only 'real' linguistic data, I feel my methodology was justified by the need for comparable data on numerous construction types for a large number of speakers. It was often the case that in a 35-40 minute recording of a speaker's narrative or story-telling style, none of the features being investigated appeared. The consequences of collecting only this kind of data will be elaborated on later in the paper.

The rule of Negative Concord is a rule which marks any occurrence of an indefinite quantifier with the feature [+NEG] in any sentence containing [+NEG]. An approximation of the rule is given in (1).

(1) Negative Concord

$$X - [+NEG] - Y - \left[\begin{matrix}+INDEF.\\+QUANT.\end{matrix}\right] - Z$$

$$1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5 \Rightarrow 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5$$
$$[+NEG]$$

Though it is assumed that this rule was once an obligatory rule, the variable output of this rule defies such a label in present-day Krio. Sentences (2)-(6) exemplify this variable output.

(2) 'I don't remember anything that happened'
a. a nɔ mɛmba natiŋ we bin bi egɛn (B)
(I NEG remember nothing REL PAST BE anymore)
b. a nɔ mɛmba ɛnitiŋ we apun
(I NEG remember anything REL happen)

(3) 'I promised not to tell anyone'
a. a dɔn promis se a nɔ go tɛl nɔbɔdi (B)
(I COMPLET promise COMP I NEG FUT tell nobody)
b. a dɔn promis se a nɔ go tɛl ɛnibɔdi (F)
(I COMPLET promise COMP I NEG FUT tell anybody)

(4) 'I don't have any clothes to wear'
a. a nɔ gɛt nɔn klos fɔ wɛr (D)
(I NEG have none clothes INFIN wear)
b. a nɔ gɛt ɛni klos fɔ wɛr (J)
(I NEG have any clothes INFIN wear)

(5) 'I don't want anybody to tell me anything about anything'
a. a nɔ want nɔbɔdi fɔ tɛl mi natiŋ bɔt
(I NEG want nobody INFIN tell me nothing about
natiŋ (I)
nothing)
b. a nɔ want ɛnibɔdi fɔ tɛl mi ɛnitiŋ bɔt
ɛnitiŋ (J)

(6) 'Nobody wanted to tell me anything'
a. nɔbɔdi nɔ want (fɔ) tɛl mi ɛnitiŋ
(nobody NEG want INFIN tell me anything)

If every speaker produced and accepted both variants, there would be justification for labeling the rule merely as optional. This is not the case. We find that given a specific stimulus (e.g., English sentence (2)), one speaker may apply the rule whereas another speaker will not. On the other hand, some speakers consistently either apply the rule or don't apply the rule, regardless of the environment, while still others may or may not apply the rule in the same environment.

Adopting the strongest hypothesis, that all variation is rule governed, it was necessary to search for the systematic relationships that would account for this variation. Since Negative Concord is a syntactic rule, in the Standard Theory sense, various syntactic environments were tested as possible conditioning factors for the application of this rule. After this failed to produce any insight into the problem, it was discovered that it was the lexical items themselves that conditioned the application of the rule. The rule was found to apply more frequently to the quantifier any, less frequently to anything and least of all to anybody.

Having isolated the conditioning factors, this variation can be illustrated by an implicational table, as in Table 1. Implicational tables, first suggested by DeCamp (1971) and improved upon by Bickerton (1973), are a means of graphically illustrating the distribution of systematically related variants in terms of the significant environments for the individual speaker. Occurrence of the least prestigous (or basilectal) form is indicated by a 1, whereas the most prestigous (or acrolectal) form is indicated by

a 2. The appearance of 12 in the same cell indicates a rule conflict. A rule conflict may be seen as an indecision in the speaker's grammar as to the appropriateness of the application of the rule.

TABLE 1

The Distribution of Negative Concord Rule with respect to Indefinite Quantifiers. Scalability = 80%

	ENVIRONMENTS		
	I	II	III
Speakers	any	anything	anybody
A	1	1	1
B	1	1	1
C	1	1	1 2
D	1	1	1 2
E	1	1	1 2
F	1	1 2	2
G	1 2	(1) 2	(1) 2
H	2	(1) 2	(1) 2
I	2	(1) 2	(1) 2
J	2	2	2

Though the actual setting up of such a table is primarily a mechanical process, Bickerton has proposed a test for their well-formedness or validity, a scalability index. The index is arrived at by dividing the number of non-deviant cells by the total number of cells filled. A deviant-free table would be 100% scalable. To quote Bickerton (1973:647):

> In practice, figures around 90% can be regarded as adequate, since chance scalability for three-place tables (e.g. containing 1, 12, and 2 as possible indices) is about 66%.

Deviants (circles in Table 1), in Bickerton's terms are occurrences of 1's to the right of a 2 in the same row (i.e. for the same speaker). These deviants are so-called not in that they are ill-formed or unacceptable utterances, but in terms of Bickerton's Normal Implication Conditions (1973:647), which I state here:

(7) Normal Implication Conditions
the presence of a basilectal index alone in a given column implies the presence of similar indices in all columns to left; while the presence of a non-basilectal index, alone or otherwise, implies the presence of similar indices, alone or otherwise, in all columns to the right.

In other words, a deviant is an index which does not meet the expectations of these conditions.

It will be noted that though the scalability index on Table 1 is safely above the chance scalability index of 66% it is well below the figures usually considered to be adequate by Bickerton. My tables are more highly constrained in two respects. First, the nature of Bickterton's unsystematic data collection forces him to construct tables with a large percentage of the cells unfilled.[4] Since all of the cells are filled in Table 1, there is a greater chance for deviants to appear, bringing the scalability index down. Secondly, Bickerton allows himself what might be referred to as a "squelch control device." A number of candidates for deviancy are given non-deviant status if they are close to an area of high concentration of other tokens of the same index. For example, looking at Table 1 we find in Column II three deviants for speakers G, H, and I. Since these 1's are relatively close to other, non-deviant 1's, I am assuming that Bickerton would grant them non-deviant status. To accept two of these as non-deviant would bring the scalability up to 86.6%.

Returning to the data, it was observed that, though the majority of the speakers in this sample maintain the rule of Negative Concord to some extent, the rule had a more restricted application for some than for others. For some the rule is downward bounded whereas for others the rule is unbounded. Many of those who would be labeled as 'basilectal', due to their frequent application of the rule, do not allow the rule to apply to indefinite quantifiers in embedded S's.

This fact gives us added insight into this particular change. The speakers who maintain the unbounded form of the rule are over 55 years old, while those who maintain a bounded rule range from 60 to 19. On the basis of this alone it seems reasonable to assume that the unbounded form of the rule is the oldest.[5]

Three stages may be hypothesized in the history of the ongoing loss of Negative Concord:

(8) Three Stages in the Loss of Negative Concord
I. Negative Concord (unbounded)
II. Negative Concord (bounded)
III. No Negative Concord

It cannot be too strongly emphasized here that none of the stages are static stages, since all three are represented by speakers in the contemporary speech community. The most dynamic change in

progress is taking place between stages II and III. Table 1 demonstrates that the rule of Negative Concord is being lost first with regard to the lexical item anybody, secondly with regard to anything and lastly with regard to any.

This process brings to mind William Wang's (1969) article in *Language*, in which he discussed the notion of lexical diffusion in phonological change. His hypothesis that residue arises from intersecting competing processes was dependent on his assumption that phonological changes move gradually through the lexicon. Here we see an example of a syntactic change moving through a lexical subset. The implication of such findings is that a number of syntactic exceptions may be explainable in terms of syntactic changes which are dependent on certain lexical features, but which have not yet reached all such items in the lexicon.

In an article entitled "Productivity in phonology", Paul Kiparsky (1973) suggests two possible analyses as explanation for a set of facts in the phonological history of Finnish. Though the whole argument is too involved to present here, his preferred solution was one in which the major rule in question ($t \rightarrow s / \_\_ i$) eliminated the rule exception features on a number of verbs, thus simplifying the grammar by allowing the rule to apply more generally. His major objection to the second solution was that it tended to add exception features to lexical items, which he claimed to be a highly unexpected kind of change.

It should be noticed that this latter kind of change is exactly the change we see with regard to the loss of the Negative Concord rule. The speaker must first mark the lexical item anybody with the exception feature and then anything and then any. Presumably, after the rule has been lost completely, all exception features for that rule would somehow be erased.

A very strong hypothesis that can be extracted from Kiparsky's paper is the following:

> Linguistic change proceeds in such a way as to eliminate, not add, rule exception features, thus simplifying the grammar.

The Krio data presented above represents a clear counterexample to such a claim about the nature of historical change. Thus, Kiparsky's arguments for his preferred solution are weakened considerably.

3. Prepositions in Krio

Whereas only two variants were found to be operating within the Negative Concord variation subsystem, the prepositional cases are more complex, in that we often find multiple variants. Although a fairly large set of prepositions is to be found in Krio, only three were observed to be participating in variation. The three prepositions which concern us here are 'from', 'of', and the instrumental 'with'.

For ease of exposition, each of the three will be discussed separately before discussing them together as a subsystem within

the language. Let us first consider the instrumental 'with'. The following sentences examplify the two variants observed:

(9) 'I cut the meat with a knife.'
a. a tek nɛf kɔt di bif (E)
(I take knife cut the meat)
b. a kɔt di bif wit nɛf (C)
(I cut the meat with knife)

(10) 'What do you make rice bread with?'
a. wɛtin yuna de tek mek raysbred? (B)
(what you-pl PROGR take make ricebread)
b. wɛtin yu de mek raysbred wit? (H)
(what you PROGR make ricebread with)

(11) 'He hit the boy with a stick.'
a. na tik i tek bit di boy (I)
(COP stick he take strike the boy)
b. i bit di bɔbɔ wit tik (F)
(he strike the boy with stick)

Here we find alternation between wit, the Krio phonetic realization of the English preposition, and a serial verb construction involving the verb tek. The use of the verb 'take' in conjunction with a noun to denote 'instrumentality' is a common feature of the Kwa languages. In an earlier paper (Williams 1971) I suggested that such serial verb constructions originated from a Yoruba semantic structure. The speakers of that language played an extremely signifcant role in the development of Krio. Since it is assumed that this change is moving in the direction of the more prestigous language, we are witnessing the replacement of the basilectal serial construction by an English preposition.

A large number of the citations containing the serial verb were sentences in which the object of the verb tek had been clefted (cf. (11a)). However, none of the sentences containing wit had a clefted element. Furthermore, it appears that the object of wit cannot be clefted. Though (12a) is a perfectly acceptable acrolectal form, (12b) sounds very stilted and (12c) is out of the question. (12d) presents itself as the only acceptable sentence in which the object of wit is clefted from (12a).

(12) 'He cut the meat with a knife.'
a. i kɔt di bif wit nɛf
(he cut the meat with knife)
b. *? na nɛf i kɔt di bif wit
(COP knife he cut the meat with)
c. *na nɛf i kɔt di bif
d. na nɛf i tek kɔt di bif
(COP knife he take cut the meat)

I first hypothesized that there must be some restriction in Krio against the stranding of prepositions. This seemed like a

reasonable explanation of the facts since similar restrictions are found on the locative preposition na. (13a) is a perfectly good sentence containing the preposition na. Note that when the object of na is clefted, the stranded preposition is deleted, yielding (13b). Sentence (13c) with the undeleted, stranded, preposition is unacceptable.[6]

(13) a. wi de go na makit 'We are going to
(we PROGR go LOC market) the market.'
b. na makit wi de go 'It's to the market
(COP market we PROGR go) we are going.'
c. *na makit wi de go na.

This hypothesis, however, is refuted by examples such as (10b) in which the preposition wit is stranded, but the sentence is acceptable. Since such occurrences are infrequent, a restriction against the stranding of prepositions seems to have at least nominal status in the grammar.

If we are forced to give up the 'no stranding of prepositions' hypothesis, other options are available to us. Another possibility is that the recognition of wit as a foreign item prevents the application of well-established optional rules to any member in the same phrase. This is not an unexpected kind of restriction, since the restriction against the application of certain well-motivated rules to foreign words is a well-known occurrence.[7]

The following responses were elicited for the preposition 'of':

(14) 'Two of the bananas have spoiled.'
a. tu pan dɛm banana dɔn pwɔyl (A)
(two of those banana COMPLET spoil)
b. tu di banana dɔn pwɔyl (C)
(two the banana COMPLET spoil)
(15) 'Three of the men went home early.'
a. tri pan dɛm man bin go om kwik (A)
(three of those man PAST go home quick)
b. tri ɔv dɛm man dɛm go om kwik (D)
(three of those man PL go home quick)

The three variants relevant here are:

pan, ɔv, and NUMBER + DET

Of the three pan and NUMBER + DET were taken to be the basilectal form whereas ɔv was taken as the acrolectal form. The only other point of interest with regard to this variant is that a number of times speakers merely disregarded the 'of' and produced a sentence containing the noun preceded by a number. In other words, rather than (15a) or (15b) they produced (16).

(16) tri man dɛŋ go om kwik (E)
(three man PL go home quick)

Whether this response was due to faulty hearing or whether it is a legitimate alternative was not determinable.

The last prepositional variable is 'from'. It turns out that the semantic range found in English is skewed in the Krio semantic structure in terms of the objects it takes. We find one set of forms before human objects and another set of forms before non-human objects. Observe the following utterances:

NON-HUMAN OBJECTS

(17) 'Take two oranges from the basket/calabash.'

a. go t k tu ɔrinc kɔmɔt na da kalbas. (A)
(go take two orange come-out LOC the calabash)

b. tek tu ɔrinc na di kalbas. (G)
(take two orange LOC the calabash)

c. tek tu ɔrinc insay di baskit (H)
(... inside ...)

d. go tek tu ɔrinc frɔm da kalbas. (F)

(18) 'One of us has stolen the money from the cash-box.'

a. na wan pan wi tif di mɔni kɔmɔt insay
(COP one of us steal the money come-out inside
di kyasbɔks. (D)
the cash box

b. na wan pan wi dɔn tif di mɔni
(COP one of us COMPLET steal the money
kɔmɔt na (H)
come-out LOC the cashbox)

c. wan pan wi, na wi dɔn tif di mɔni na di
yasbɔks (J)

d. wan pan wi dɔn tif da mɔni we de na da
kyasbɔks. (A)
(... REL BE LOC ...)

HUMAN OBJECTS

(19) 'Don't take that X from your brother.'

a. nɔ tek da wan de kɔmɔt frɔm yu
(NEG take DEM one there come-out from your
brɔda-o. (A)
brother)

b. nɔ tek da banana tu yu brɔda (B)
(NEG take DEM banana from your brother)

c. nɔ tek da banana de frɔm yu brɔdá-o (D)

d. nɔ tek da banana kɔmɔt frɔm yu brɔda. (H)

e. nɔ tek da banana na yu brɔda in
(NEG take DEM banana LOC your brother his
an (I)
hand)

The variants of 'from' before a non-human object are:

(20) 1. (kɔmɔt) na
2. (kɔmɔt) insay
3. REL BE LOC (we de na)
4. frɔm

It should be noted that the forms with kɔmɔt are participating in a serial verb construction to convey the information, 'out from'. As far as I can determine, the first three forms on the list are all basilectal, while only frɔm is acrolectal. Although it is conceivable that there is an early stage in this change at which na and insay are being preferred over kɔmɔt na and kɔmɔt insay, I have no evidence to substantiate such a stage. Creoles with whom I have apoken about this feel that both forms are equally good Krio with perhaps a slight subtlety in meaning. At any rate, it is clear that a change from the basilectal forms to the acrolectal form results in a consequent loss of seriality in this area of the grammar.

The variants found to occur before a human object are:

(21) 1. (kɔmɔt) tu
2. (kɔmɔt) na PRON an
3. (kɔmɔt) frɔm

Here again we find that the only form which qualifies as acrolectal is the one containing frɔm. Notice in this case that the change from the basilectal form to the acrolectal form does not necessarily imply loss of seriality, since we do find examples of kɔmɔt frɔm. However, the large majority of the utterances containing frɔm are not accompanied by the serial construction.

Realizing the close relationship between basilectal serial verbs and acrolectal single prepositions I hypothesized that the variation found here might constitute a subsystem of the grammar and hence might be scalable. Table 2 illustrates the implicational scale arrived at.

The hypothesis that these prepositional variants constitute a subsystem of the grammar is indeed born out by Table 2. Notice that the semantic skewing of 'from' is shown to be a significant one in that the two divisions hold non-adjacent positions on the scale. This demonstrates quite effectively, I think, that, though the acrolectal form for both environments is the same, the environments themselves are still kept quite distinct as they are in the basilectal grammar. Whether or not this distinction will be maintained even after the complete take-over of 'from' is a matter of pure speculation.

Again in trying to account for the relatively low scalability index, I can only point out that since all of the cells in my tables are filled, there is a greater chance for deviants to appear. As in the first table, I have not exempted deviant 1's in proximity to areas with a high concentration of 1's as Bickerton has done. Candidates for such exemption in Table 2 are the circled 1's in Column II for F and D; those in Column III for B and C; and that found in column IV for J. Disregarding these 5 deviants, the scalability index jumps up to 87.5%.

TABLE 2.
Distribution of Prepositional Variants. Scalability = 75%.

Speakers	I	II	III	IV
E	1	1	1	1 2
A	1	1	1	1 2
J	1	1	1 2	(1) 2
G	1	1	1 2	2
I	1	1	2	(1) 2
H	1	1	2	2
B	1	1 2	(1) 2	(1) 2
C	1	1 2	(1) 2	2
F	1 2	(1) 2	(1)	(1) 2
D	1 2	(1) 2	(1) 2	2

I = 'from' non-human; II = 'of';
III = 'from' human; IV = 'with'

4. Further Observations

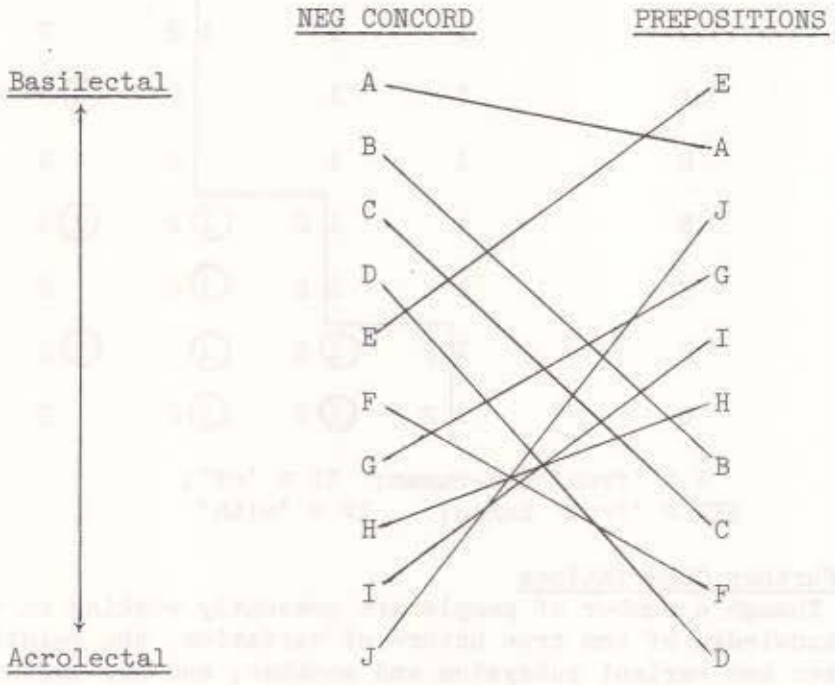
Though a number of people are presently working on variation, our knowledge of the true nature of variation, the relationship between one variant subsystem and another, and how variation is to be represented formally is miniscule. To my knowledge, no one has inquired into the relationship which obtains between variant subsystems within a speech community or whether these subsystems operate independently of each other. My data provides us with some indications of what the relationship is and suggests that this might be a fruitful area of further investigation.

Looking at Tables 1 and 2 we find that none of the speakers holds the same position in both tables. Speaker A, objectively and subjectively, the most 'basilectal' in the sample, has moved the least of all, from position one to position two. Diagram I more clearly illustrates the different positions of the speakers with regard to both variant subsystems.

The terms basilect and acrolect imply that there are two rather self-contained entities, two separable bodies of speakers each operating a grammar specifiably distinct with regard to some features of those grammars. Given such an assumption, we would expect to find that speakers who participate at the basilectal end of one variant subsystem will also participate at the basilectal end of the other variant subsystems within that language. Diagram I demonstrates that, at least with regard to the two variant subsystems

considered here, this is not the case. On the contrary, it shows the continuum to be a very fluid system in which the terms basilectal and acrolectal are completely relative terms, meaningful only in relation to a specific variant subsystem and a particular individual or isolect. Further investigation into other variant subsystems for these same individuals will support or refute this hypothesis.

Diagram I.



Implicational tables, which are based on comparable data for all of the informants, like those presented in this paper, may give us insight into other interesting questions, especially those about the role of the individual in linguistic change. For instance, looking again at Tables 1 and 2, it appears to be the case that those who have numerous rule conflicts on one table have relatively stable configurations on the other table. If it were found to be the case, even after considering four or more variant subsystems, that speaker X actively participates (i.e. has numerous rule conflicts) in only one of those subsystems while the others remain relatively stable, one might suggest the following hypothesis:

> Tentative Hypothesis
> An individual may actively participate in only one variant subsystem in his language at any given time, other on-going changes being kept in push-down storage until the rule conflict is resolved.

Assuming that linguistic change is a learning process in which the

individual actively learns new forms, new exception features, new rules, etc., we would expect to find a limit on the amount of effort an individual can relegate to such a task.

Until the comparison of multiple variant subsystems is attempted, this hypothesis remains conjecture. However, if such an hypothesis finds support, we might possibly have found a partial explanation for the gradualness rather than the immediateness of linguistic change.

5. Summary

In summary, I have described two variant subsystems of Krio. The use of implicational tables demonstrated that these variants are scalable which is indicative of change-in-progress. With the added requirement that implicational tables be fully specified, it was found that they can provide us with interesting insights into the nature of historical change. In order to fully specify such tables we must rely on more traditional methodology in collecting data, in addition to the "new methodology" described in the literature on variation. And though I suggested a number of areas of further research utilizing implicational tables, it must be remembered that such tables are not themselves analyses or formal statements of variation. Rather, they are useful devices for illustrating how a change progresses from one environment to another, and the degree of participation of the individual in such subsystemic changes.

Footnotes

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[1]There are many who see no contradiction between Chomsky's narrowly defined domain and the recent attempts to describe and account for variational phenomena. It has been suggested to me that optional rules may be seen as a primitive attempt to account for just those facts which concern those who are studying variation in more detail. Since Chomsky's major concern is to discover what competence is, it is quite possible that his investigations might eventually have led him to a close study of variation. Since a number of Chomsky's statements are open to different interpretations, I will only state here that he appears to have excluded variational data from his corpus of consideration. However, further study of variation will reveal whether such data can be adequately described by an extension of the present formalism or whether the very nature of such data necessitates a completely different orientation.

[2]I am eternally grateful to my many informants and friends in Sierra Leone, without whose cooperation this study could not have been conducted. Special thanks goes to those people of

Leicester Village who were my neighbors as well as my daily informant-teachers.

[3]The capital letters in parentheses denote the speakers position on Table 1.

[4]See, for instance, Table 2 in Bickerton (1973:651).

[5]My present data is incomplete with regard to the unbounded rule, since the only utterances elicited with indefinite quantifiers in an embedded sentence (with NEG in the higher S) contained the lexical item anything. Whether or not the unbounded form of the rule operated variably or indifferently to the three indefinite quantifiers remains a question.

[6]The locative nà and the copula nà are homophonous, but are related in no other way.

[7]Charles Bird has suggested to me that if this is indeed the case, it provides us with syntactic evidence for the directionality of the change, in that Cleft applies freely to the older, serial verb construction, but not to the newer, English prepositional phrase.

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